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Newsletter

of the Canadian Waterfront Resource Centre

ISSN 0840-9846

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WATERSHED

The Second Interim Report of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Toronto, September 12, 1990 ... The second Interim Report of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront was released today by the federal and provincial governments.

Commenting on the release of the report, Commissioner David Crombie said: "I have been encouraged over the past year by the continuing strong public interest in the waterfront — particularly its environmental aspects — and by signs of an emerging consensus among all levels of government concerning waterfront policies and priorities. The aim of this report — titled *Watershed* — is to provide the basis for governments to act now on the fundamental decisions that have to be taken to ensure that the people of Toronto have the waterfront they want and deserve."

Highlights of the Report include:

Principles for Waterfront Regeneration; Ecosystem Approach

The Commission calls again for a "green" strategy across the entire

watershed to preserve the waterfront, river valley systems, headwaters, wetlands and other significant features in the public interest.

Based on the public's comments and its own analysis of the state of the region's environment as an ecosystem under stress, the Commission recommends the adoption of a set of nine principles to guide regeneration of the waterfront. All governments should accept an ecosystem approach.

People and governments should seek to make the waterfront:

- clean
- green
- useable
- diverse
- open
- accessible
- connected
- affordable, and
- attractive.

Environmental Proposals

Over 30 of the 80 recommendations made by the Royal Commission are focused on environmental issues. They include proposals to:

- integrate the philosophy and principles of the ecosystem approach into the Planning Act and other relevant provincial legislation as it affects the Greater Toronto Bio-region;
- preserve the ecological, scenic and recreational significance of the Oak Ridges Moraine and river valleys;
- improve water quality within the context of the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement;
- introduce a comprehensive lakefill policy;
- restore fish, wildlife and natural areas;
- double the number of trees in waterfront municipalities by the turn of the century (with emphasis on native tree and shrub species) and create new community forests in waterfront areas, e.g. between Whitby and Oshawa, and at the foot of the Don Valley.

Creation of a Waterfront Trail

The Commission has developed a conceptual plan for a region-wide, 150 kilometre-long Waterfront Trail from Burlington to Newcastle,

and recommends that the Province should coordinate its creation in collaboration with waterfront municipalities. It should be completed by 1993 to celebrate the bicentennial of the township of York and the centennial of the Ontario provincial parks system.

Waterfront Partnership Agreements

The report also deals with waterfront plans and projects in Halton region, Mississauga, Etobicoke, the Central Toronto Waterfront, Scarborough and Durham Region.

The Commission recommends that the Province declare the waterfront from Burlington to Newcastle

to be a Provincial Resource. The Province should provide leadership, resources and opportunities for collaboration with all levels of government and other parties for the regeneration of the waterfront through a series of Waterfront Partnership Agreements.

Regeneration of the Central Toronto Waterfront

The Commission proposes a number of initiatives for the regeneration of the Central Toronto Waterfront which include:

- new and improved Waterfront Parklands (at Exhibition Place, Ontario Place, Fort York, HMCS York, Harbourfront, the Railway Lands, East Bayfront and the Port Industrial area, including expansion of Cherry Beach Park);



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- revitalization of the Martin Goodman Trail, and a waterfront promenade connecting waterfront parks, open spaces and urban uses;
 - dismantling the Gardiner-Lakeshore Expressway in a phased program over a period of 20 years, to be replaced by an integrated system of improved urban arterials, and improved public transit (GO, subway, bus and LRT, and possibly waterborne commuter transport), as a means of improving the environment and land use, and removing this barrier between downtown Toronto and its waterfront;
 - reviewing the Railway Lands Plan to ensure its integration with Harbourfront and other neighbouring lands in the context of changes to the Gardiner-Lakeshore corridor and other changes along the central waterfront;
 - maintaining the Port of Toronto as a regional port, retaining both public and private elements, with the publicly held port lands consolidated on approximately 40 hectares (100 acres) of lands comprising MT 51/52 and adjoining lands on the south side of the Ship Channel;
 - transferring certain non-port lands of the THC at the eastern end of the Port area to the City of Toronto for development of an industrial park for "environmentally-friendly" industry;
 - creating a Centre for Green Enterprise and Industry with a mandate to collect and analyze environmental information; conduct research and development into environmentally-friendly enterprise and industry, and provide education and

training for university and college students;

- transferring remaining non-port lands of the THC at the western end of the Port area and in East Bayfront to a new provincially-incorporated non-profit Toronto Waterfront Regeneration Land Trust for redevelopment as mixed-use, and
- cleaning up the Don River and river valley from its source to its mouth.

Etobicoke Waterfront

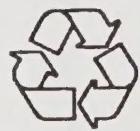
The Commission is concerned about the current state of plans and development of the Etobicoke Waterfront and proposes that the Province should declare this city's waterfront to be an area of Provincial Interest under the Planning Act.

The Province, Metropolitan Toronto and Etobicoke jointly should develop a comprehensive Waterfront Plan, and, while it is being done, the Province should impose a moratorium on development there which should remain in effect until the new plan is adopted.

Copies of the second Interim Report, *Watershed*, may be picked up at the Royal Commission offices at 207 Queen's Quay West, Suite 580, Toronto.

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